

Dear Representative Spallone,

I am writing to you as the Chairman of the Government & Elections Committee concerning, Section 19 of House Bill 5520.

This Section provides for the exchange of 17.40 acres of land from the Clark Creek Wildlife Management Area, in Haddam, CT, with lands from Goodspeed Opera House Foundation, Inc., or Riverhouse Properties, LLC, which exchange is supposed to be of equal value.

These 17 acres are adjacent to Eagle Landing State Park, and the Valley Railroad State Park.

The State purchased these 17 Acres in June 2003, for \$1,350,000.00. The town of Haddam appraised these 17 acres for \$1,500,000.00 in October 2005.

There is a deed restriction as follows: "should be retained in its natural scenic or open condition as park or public open space" Referring to the intent of the seller.

The land being offered by the Goodspeed, in exchange, was obtained from the State of Connecticut, Public Act 226, for \$1.00. The land being offered (54 Acres), by Riverhouse Properties, is part of an 87 Acres purchased in May 2009, for \$428,000.00. The remaining 33 acres have been proposed for future residential development. There is nothing of equal value in this exchange.

This proposal was part of HB 6695, which was Vetoed by the Governor in July 2009. At a public meeting held in Haddam in July 2009, a large contingency of Haddam residents spoke to oppose the HB 6695 transfer. This 2010, HB 5520, Section 19, is a repeat of the same language from 2009. Nothing has changed to make the transaction any more acceptable.

I believe the residents of the town of Haddam; have made their position very clear. In addition, I believe the transaction, as presented, would result in an environmental and monetary loss to the State of Connecticut, and such a transfer is not in the best interest of the taxpayers.

For the above reasons, I urge the Committee not to approve this land transfer proposal.

**Very truly yours,
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